

COMMUNIST POPULAR FRONTS

1917-1956

**FOUR DECADES
OF PERFIDY**



INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR RESEARCH

P. O. BOX 1170
GRAND CENTRAL STATION
NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

APARTADO 25707
MEXICO 12, D. F.
MEXICO

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The End Old Days are Over

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The concept of a Popular Front does not date from the 1930's as many people imagine. It is as old as Bolshevism. For the Bolshevik splinter of the Marxist movement from which Soviet communism evolved has always been a minority without mass popular support. But it has had other assets: iron discipline always —ruthless force when needed and trickery and treachery when expedient. These are not hidden tactics. They have been proudly proclaimed by every leader of world communism from Lenin to Khrushchev.

The End First Steps

From Ireland to China and Egypt, the Red drums of every Communist Party are beating the new refrain: Popular Front! People's Front! Popular Front!
But this is no new innovation. It is a policy that they have used before. Many times. And so this time their slogan "Popular Front" demands at least a hundred more meetings, not least meetings: that includes in similar, such that themselves "convinced", and then a few, of them with a great deal more force with the International Bureau of the COMINTERN, as published in the office of Moscow's Pravda.

COMMUNIST POPULAR FRONTS

The Bad Old Days are Over

Stalin is dead. The bad days of Stalinist dictatorship, of Stalinist judicial murders and forced labor, and of Stalinist political double-dealing and sell-outs are long since over. The new world communism, the new leadership of Khrushchev and Bulganin is different. Communism as a doctrine was always a progressive and liberal force; only Stalin and Stalinism were evil. But the last days of Stalinism are past. Communism again represents a world force for democratic social and political action which is willing and anxious to cooperate with all other progressive political forces everywhere.

That is current political line of Moscow and its captive Communist parties in every country.

Once again the Communists have called for Popular Fronts, coalition governments of all progressive political parties including themselves.

The Red Pied Pipers

From Iceland to Tierra del Fuego the Red drums of every Communist Party are beating the new refrain: Popular Front! Popular Front! Popular Front!

But this is no new composition. It is a melody that they have used before. Many times. And to this same drum beat of "Popular Front" thousands of true democrats have marched and been marched: first shoulder to shoulder with their Communist "comrades", and then in front of them with a gun at their backs—to the interrogation rooms of the NKVD—to sudden death in the cellars of Moscow's Lubianka,

or of a Barcelona jail—or to the lingering death of the slave-labor camps above the Arctic circle.

Popular Front! Popular Front! Popular Front! It is and old Red March. Only the leaders of the band have been changed. Stalin did not compose it, but for a while he led the band. Lenin led it too. So did Dimitrov. And Luis Carlos Prestes.

For the Popular Front is a basic Communist tactic, to be used and lauded when in suits local conditions, and to be spit upon and discarded when it has failed or is inopportune.

Divide and Conquer — In Reverse

The concept of a Popular Front does not date from the 1930's as many people imagine. It is as old as Bolshevism. For the Bolshevik splinter of the Marxist movement from which Soviet communism evolved has always been a minority without mass popular support. But it has had other assets: iron discipline always—ruthless force when needed and trickery and treachery when expedient. These are not hidden tactics. They have been proudly proclaimed by every leaders of world communism from Lenin to Khrushchev.

Divide and Conquer is not a Communist slogan. From Caesar to Adolf Hitler this has been a prime tactic of conquest-minded leaders. But the Communists have taken this essence of Machiavellian politics and given it a new Red twist. Not divide and conquer, but join and conquer. From the moment the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917 until today this tactic has been used by the Red leadership in their struggle for power, through the adoption of the slogan of United Front.

The Mechanics of Power

It should never be forgotten that the Communists, in every country, have always been a minority political power. This was true in the Russia of 1917, when the Bolsheviks took power representing no more than 5 per cent of the Russian population. It is true, today, when the Soviet Com-

munist Party, which has a complete political monopoly over a nation of 200 million, still counts much less than 5 per cent of the population as Communist Party members. The actual facts of the first Communist seizure of power are little known by the general public and largely distorted by the Communists. But they are a part of history and are available even in official Soviet histories, which sugar-coat the unpleasant truths of a small and ruthless minority first using, then strangling its opposition.

In 1917 Russia was on the way to true democracy. The Provisional Government of Kerenski and all the political parties supporting it were in favor of democratic government, and of the distribution of the land belonging to the nobles among the peasants. But Russia was still in the war fighting the Central Powers and the Provisional Government of Russia, while opposing war in principle, rightly held that to stop the war would mean handing over huge chunks of Russia to Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Bolsheviks decided this policy. It is notable that it was the Germans who sent Lenin back into Russia in the famous "sealed train", and that after he had overthrown the Provisional Government he signed the disastrous Treaty of Brest-Litovsk which fulfilled the direst predictions of Kerenski. Lenin signed away the Baltic provinces, and lost White Russia, the Ukraine, and most of the Caucasus. But this was yet to come when the Bolsheviks were maneuvering for power.

The most powerful party of the left in the Provisional Government was the Social Revolutionaries, largely representing the peasants, and whose major platform was an early and radical reform. The Bolsheviks had taken over this policy, and the first Popular Front attempt was that of June 1917, when Lenin addressed the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets /Councils/ of Peasants' Deputies in Petrograd (Lenin, Sochinenia, 3rd edition, Vol. XX, pp. 403-18) and called for united action.

When in September General Kornilov revolted against the Provisional Government, the Bolsheviks, who had themselves revolted and attempted to overthrow the government in the summer (Lenin had been in hiding since July) supported the Government forces in the defense of Petrograd against Kor-

nikov's forces. Kornilov's rebellion failed and the Bolsheviks loudly proclaimed that they had "saved the Revolution". It is notable that Kornilov himself, although a conservative, was not a reactionary. He was not of noble birth and was not even a monarchist. Misguided or not, his major motive was that as the Provisional Government was responsible for the disintegration of the Army at the front, it must be overthrown to tighten discipline and defend Russia from the advancing armies of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Social reforms (and Kornilov was in favor of them) could wait until Russia's enemies were defeated. Kornilov represented the moderate Right much as Kerenski represented the moderate Left. Such men as Kornilov or Kerenski, idealistic and basically "liberal" in thinking, are almost invariably thrust aside in such times of crisis by the ruthless radicals of their own side. The later leaders of the White and Red forces in the Civil War bore little resemblance to the patriotic and "evolutionist" Russian Army officer Kornilov, or the liberal parliamentarian lawyer Kerenski.

In September 1917 Kornilov's revolt was defeated and the Left was firmly in control. Kerenski wrongly believed that Bolsheviks who had helped defend the Left would continue to do so. But the Bolsheviks were far more opposed to Kerenski and the liberal Left than Kornilov. And far more dangerous to liberal democracy. For while Kerenski and the liberal Left regarded the Bolsheviks as more radical fellow socialists, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had only implacable hatred for such "bourgeois sentimentalists". Lenin had no sentimentality toward other Leftist parties. To him the liberals, the socialists, and the reactionary monarchists were all the same. And in the Bolshevik view, even Marxists who were not of their Party were considered "class enemies as much as Tsar Nicholas' secret police."

This first Bolshevik cooperation with the Left lasted only a few days after Kornilov was defeated. Almost immediately the Bolsheviks decided to seize power. Key men were placed in Government army units, and on November 7th the Bolsheviks stabbed their fellow Leftists in the back and set up a government they could control until the elections, to be held November 25th, for the Constituent Assembly of a new govern-

ment. This election had been in prospect for some time and the Bolsheviks had been officially in favor of an early election before they seized power. It had helped to consolidate their position as a "democratic" party to allow the elections an to promise to abide by the results. But despite all the pressure they could apply, the Bolsheviks only obtained 175 seats out of 707. The Bolsheviks set about splitting their opposi-



tion and presenting the few members of their opposition as would join them as the component parts of a United Front. They were able to get only 40 of the 410 Socialist Revolutionaries to join them, and of these several were given posts in Lenin's government, which now represented itself as "broad-

ly representative" of the Russian masses. But Lenin's demand that the Assembly should recognize the soviets as superior to itself was voted down. As it would, not do Lenin's bidding it was promptly dissolved by armed Bolsheviks. The splinter group of Socialist Revolutionaries who had joined the Bolsheviks were used for a few more months to maintain the fiction of a "coalition" government, and when they had served their purpose and the Bolsheviks (Communists) were firmly in control of North and Central Russia they were discarded like old orange peels.

The Communists were still weak in Southern Russia, and when in 1918 a People's Republic was set up in the North Caucasus they applied the same tactic on a broader scale. They included not only the Socialist Revolutionaries, but Mensheviks and even different Nationalist parties in a United Front, with themselves in only the key government positions. Again, when they had consolidated their position, they ruthlessly and cynically suppressed all other parties and liquidated their partners.

The first gullible victims of the United Front tactic were thus in Russia itself—in Central Russia, in the Caucasus, in Armenia and in Georgia—. But despite the Communist record of duplicity stretching from 1917 to 1956, there are still some democratic lambs who are willing to walk into United Front caves with carnivorous Red Tigers.

Theory, Definition, and Development of Different Fronts

It is useful to examine the theory of the United Front as developed and proclaimed by the Communists themselves. There are subtle but important differences between a United and a Popular Front; and between a "United Front from below" and a "United Front from above". Communist ideology is a complicated body of dogma which proposes different tactical approaches for different tactical aims. And the Communist terminology employed is a special language all but unintelligible unless one has the key. In "1984", a satire on Stalinist Communism by the great English Socialist writer George Orwell, the "Communist Ministry of Truth" of 1984, is

responsible for such slogans as "Freedom is Slavery" and "War is Peace". His satire was particularly effective, and frightening, because it was basically so accurate. Before proceeding with this short history of United Fronts, it will be profitable to define the theories and terms used by the Communists in this regard.

As early as 1916, Lenin said that as revolutionaries Communists should "know how to use every popular movement (in every crisis) in order to sharpen an extend the crisis". (*Discussion of Self-Determination Summed Up.*) Later, in 1920, describing the benefits of temporary and supple compromise he wrote: "The more powerful enemy can be conquered only by exerting the greatest effort and by thoroughly, carefully, attentively, and skillfully taking advantage of every, even the smallest 'rift' among the enemies, of every antagonism of interest among the bourgeoisie, of various countries, and among various countries, and among various groups or types of bourgeoisie within various countries, by taking advantage of every, even the smallest opportunity of gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be only temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable, and conditional". (*Lenin, Selected Works, 1920*).

The theory of coalition government or "democratic revolution" was outlined in Lenin's *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*. The "democratic revolution" was an ideological invention of Lenin, added to the "bourgeois revolution" (to overthrow feudalism) and the "proletarian revolution" (to overthrow capitalism). Communists were encouraged to take part in a "bourgeois revolution" with other political parties in certain circumstances. This was a "democratic revolution". In this case the Communists would assume as prominent a role as feasible or expedient until feudalism was overthrown, after which the Communists were to resume the struggle against the other parties of the coalition until the "Socialist revolution" was successful and the proletarian party (Communists) had gained complete power. As for the other parties and the "proletariat" (Communists): "Class struggle between them is inevitable... this struggle will be the most far-reaching and extensive... Here our path lies not from autocracy to a republic,

but from a petty-bourgeois democratic republic to Socialism."

These are the basic tenets of Communist "Frontism" as formulated by the genius of the Russian Revolution and the greatest modern Communist. His successors improved and sharpened them, and applied even more cynical and treacherous tactics, tactics that even Lenin, with his lingering traces of idealism would not have been capable of sinking to.

What then are the different Front tactics which have evolved from Lenin's basic theories? To begin with, the Communists always profess to be for "unity" and "broad united fronts" around one or another issue, just as they always profess to be for "peace". They use the word "unity" even when their line is most divisive and when their tactics consist in using only their hard core as shock troops. The fact that they use the word "unity" about any given tactical line tells literally nothing about that line.

United Front

The tactics of the "United Front" as such were first urged by Lenin in 1921 when he became convinced that "the Revolution in the West was delayed" and the immediate assault had to be postponed indefinitely. Capitalism was "stabilizing" and with it the non-Communist trade unions, Socialist and Labor Parties. The Communist Parties proved to be everywhere in a minority, and, because of Lenin's urgent splitting tactics, in many countries a very weak minority. Therefore he ordered the British Communist Party to "propose unity" to the British Labor Party and try to enter into it as a federated body; he ordered the Communists to dissolve their dual unions in most countries and join the mass unions; and he ordered the Communist Parties to propose "united fronts" with the Socialists and labor movement on "defensive" issues that actually concerned great masses of workmen. Very few real "united fronts" were entered into, but the working masses wanted to know "Why don't the various labor groups get together?" and the Communists did their best to put the blame on the Socialists. Very soon the united front tactics degenerated into an attempt to win their rank and file away

from the Socialists by posing as the champions of such unity. This gave rise to:

The "United Front From Below"

Where brief alliances (genuine united fronts) were formed, the Communists used their contact with the Socialist rank and file to attack and criticize the Socialist leaders and to try to win away their followers. Increasingly the Communists made "unity" proposals merely for the purpose of posing as champions of unity, of "exposing" rival parties as opponents of unity, and of winning away some of their followers. Actually this "united front from below" tactic had nothing to do with united fronts, but was merely one more method of attacking other parties. In fact the "united front from below" is the direct opposite of the "united front". Lenin stroke incapacitated him for full political life about 1922, and his followers were clumsier and more cynical than he had been. They summed up their views in the Report of the Chairman of the Comintern to its Fifth Congress in 1924.

The "United Front Above and Below"

Zinoviev's classic formula, endorsed by the Soviet Communist Party and the Comintern Congress, reads: "United Front From Below" — This tactic is really always fighting... even during the sharpest period of barricade fighting... When Kerenski was marching on Petersburg we managed to mobilize a part of the workers of the Social Revolutionary Party against their own government. United Front from below — always.

"United Front from Above and Below at the Same Time" — This form must also be applied fairly often. Not always but fairly often in the lands where we are in a minority. It is a method of agitation and mobilization of the masses, not as a method of political coalition with the Social Democracy.

"The third case is the *United Front From Above. Alone*—(That is, a sincere coalition) I think we must say about this: *Never!*"

"United Front from below—almost always; United Front from below and at the same time from above—"fairly often with all necessary guarantees as the tactics of revolutionary mobilizing of the masses; United Front from above—never!" (Protokoll des V. Kongresses, Vol. 1, pp. 80-81).

Thus the united front as a real unity move, if Lenin ever intended it as such, was given up within a year after he proposed it and gave way to the spurious use of the unity slogan and even temporary coalitions, purely for the purposes of splitting away followers from other parties. Thereupon the Communists began to set up a number of "Innocent Fronts".

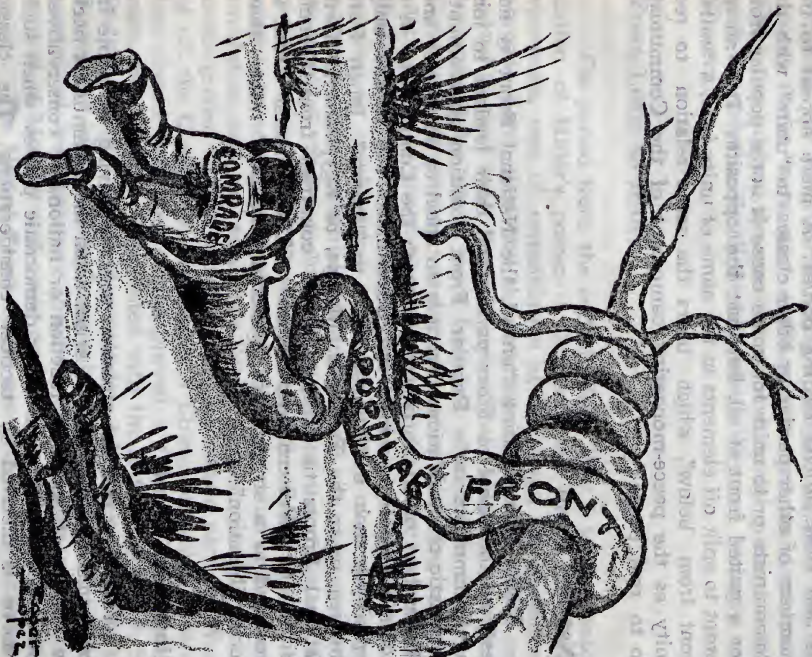
The "Innocent Fronts"

These are purely Communist fringe organizations set up by the Communist Party but using non-Party Members and well-intentioned innocents to camouflage their Communist character and to "broaden" them. A whole network of such fronts has been set up in every possible country; against war, against fascism, for civil liberties, for friendship with the Soviet Union, for unemployment, insurance, ad infinitum. They talk much of their "non-partisan" character and of the unity of member of all parties and classes, including of course the Communist, but they have never included other parties as parties.

"The Popular Front"

This most successful tactic, which is examined in more detail later, evolved in the middle 1930's when after several attempts to come to an agreement with Hitler, Stalin decided to support the unifying and liberal forces in democratic countries. The popular front was a genuine offer

to parties, and even governments. In France it involved a coalition bloc with the Socialist Party led by Leon Blum, and with the Radical Socialists led by Daladier. "Fraternal hand" was also extended by Browder (the head of the U. S. Com-



munist) to the New Deal Democrats, and by Italy's Togliatti (the Communist) to the Catholic Church. The Communists used the coalitions

to infiltrate the other parties, and to try to win away followers, but the real test and sign of the United Front is that it involves praise of other parties such as the Socialist Party or the Democratic Party and formal agreements with their leaders and their official leading bodies. A mere appeal to the members of other parties or other classes to "unite" with the Communists or to unite for some cause is not a popular front nor a united front at all, but just the opposite. It is an attempt to split off elements in the name of unity i.e., a "united front from below", which bears the same relation to real unity as the peace-mongering campaigns of the Communists do to real peace.

"National Front"

While also stressing "unity", the National Front is not designed to appeal to other parties and their leaders to join the Communists in a Popular Front coalition government. The tactic of the National Front is to appeal to all classes and all members of all parties to join with the Communists in a "common front" in which the Communists will be the only appeal for such a National Front to "liberate" Japan from America, or to the Tunisians, Malays, or Egyptians to form National Fronts to "liberate" their countries from French, British, or "Western imperialism". The National Front is presented as a struggle for "national liberation" rather than "social liberation".

"Unpopular Front"

This is a peculiar situation actually having no name in Communist terminology. It arises when the Communists back the leaders of extreme reaction or nationalist conservatives against popular, progressive, or democratic parties when such a move is dictated by tactical considerations. The classic example was during the Hitler-Stalin honeymoon. At that time the Communist Parties in countries dominated by semi-fascist or collaborationist regimes supported them until Hitler

attacked Stalin. From the fall of France until the outbreak of the Russo-German war the French Communist Party tacitly supported the Vichy regime and attacked the de Gaulle movement. Similarly they have supported reaction in Peru, while opposing the progressive Apristas, simply because the reactionary forces were more anti-American and anti-democratic. They also support the reactionary and feudal governments in such countries as Saudi Arabia where they are strongly anti-Western. (How damned safe to bring up Yugoslavia now, as part of the United Front, now that it is all over?)

From Lenin to Hitler

The period from the end of World War I to the consolidation of Hitler's power in Germany was, from the Soviet viewpoint, one of consolidation at home and disappointment abroad. Lenin died and the internal struggle for power convulsed the still weak Soviet Union. Stalin won out and Trotsky and all his works were banished. Meanwhile the world Communist movement was not proceeding according to schedule. After an abortive revolution in Germany and a short Communist regime in Hungary in the winter of 1918-19, Communism as anything but a subversive force went into a long hiatus in the industrial countries where it was supposedly "inevitable". Stalin realistically supported the thesis of "Socialism in one country", meaning that the Soviet Union became paramount in Communist thinking rather than world revolution, and the small non-Soviet Communist Parties lost much ground to the Socialists and democratic parties. Worst of all, the Communist revolution in China, on which Moscow had pinned such great hopes, proved a fiasco. The Communists were bitterly disappointed with the rest of the world, but Stalin used this period to consolidate his power both in the Soviet and in the other Communist parties, all of which were purged of "revolutionary idealists" and brought under firm control of Moscow and made useful weapons of Soviet foreign policy. The United Front tactic was temporarily abandoned and the Sixth Congress of the Comintern adopted the slogan "Class against class". In practice this meant the sharpened and most vicious Communist onslaught against the Social

Democrats and all progressive and liberal parties, which were subject to more invective than reactionary and the emerging fascist groups. Even after Hitler seized power, Social Democrats were labeled "Social Fascists" by Moscow and its subservient Communist puppet-parties.

In Germany the Soviet Union had made its worst mistake. Communist policy was not to unite with the Social Democrats against the Nazis, but to oppose them both, hoping first to gain complete control of the German workers' movement and then to beat the Nazis to power. On Soviet orders the German Communists broke up Social Democratic meetings, and the world witnessed such shameful occurrences as German trade unionists beating of Nazi toughs armed with truncheons, only to be assailed by Communist toughs with brass knuckles and black jacks, breaking workers' heads "in the name of the working class". The split in the working class was a deliberate Communist tactic, responsible for the Nazi victory in 1933. But not only did the Soviet leaders of the German Communists betray the German workers, they betrayed and even destroyed their own Party members. For the official line was that Hitler's victory had destroyed "all democratic illusions, freed the masses from the influence of the Social Democrats, and accelerated the speed of Germany's march toward the proletarian revolution". Stern orders from Moscow insisted that the German Communists ignore the Brown terror and hold open anti-Nazi demonstrations and continue to distribute Communist literature. This Soviet insanity resulted in the Nazis scooping up almost all the German Communists, many of whom joyfully screamed Communist slogans through broken teeth in the "interrogation rooms" of the Gestapo before being processed to the Nazi concentration camps or crematoria.

While the German Communists were being sacrificed at Moscow's behest, newspaper articles and the leaders of the Soviet Union called for friendly relations with Germany. Moscow was convinced that the capitalist West was plotting against the USSR, and Hitler was obviously hostile to the West. Attempt after Communist attempt was made for a *rapprochement* with Hitlerite Germany. By 1935 it was obvious even to Moscow that Hitler was as much anti-Soviet as anti-West, and when Hitler signed a non-aggression pact

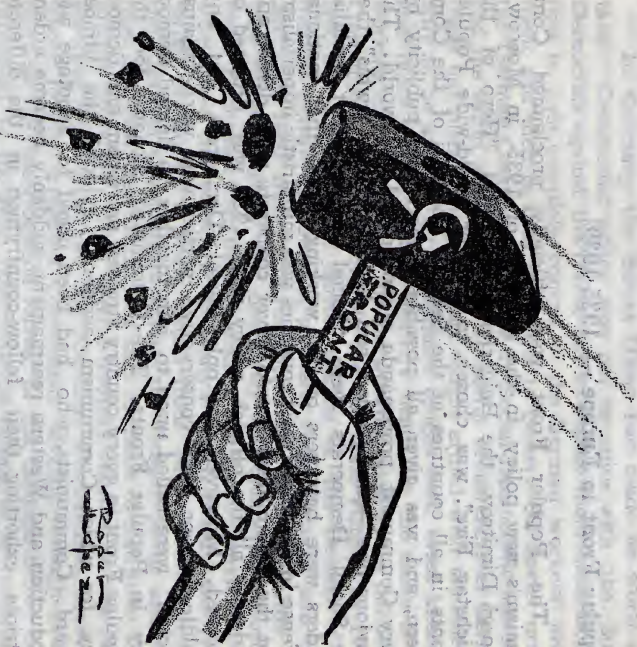
with anti-Soviet Poland, Russia, feared it was directed against her, a whole new Communist line was hatched in Moscow and proclaimed by its puppet-parties throughout the world. This was to prove to be the high watermark of Communist penetration.

Popular Front in Europe — 1935-1939

The Popular Front was officially proclaimed Communism's new policy in the summer of 1935 in Moscow. Georgi Dimitroff, the Bulgarian Communist "Hero of the Reichstag Fire", was chosen to call for world-wide Popular Fronts in all countries at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, and was given all possible support and publicity by every Communist propaganda organ around the world. The previous line—that fascism and democracy were "twins", that the Social Democrats were "Social fascists", that Socialist leaders were betrayers of the working class, that national defense in the democratic countries was militaristic imperialism, that the Communists should never cooperate with democratic leaders—all the official policy since 1928 was dropped or reserved. Moreover, not only Social Democrats, but any middle-class or even conservative parties who were "against fascism" were called upon to join together to defend democracy in Popular Fronts. The Communist slogans for the Popular Front in every country stressed patriotism and democracy, for which Communism suddenly evinced the utmost regard. Communists, who had been urged to sabotage war production and Western rearmament, suddenly became ardent patriots exhorting their fellow-countrymen in the different countries of the West to increase war production and to support Western armed forces to the utmost. In international politics, local Communist leaders called for collective security—a series of treaties and mutual defense pacts among the threatened anti-fascist nations—with every means at their command.

This policy brought the Communists new influence and prestige, and millions of gullible Western democrats swallowed the bait. They believed that world Communism was sincere

in a desire for cooperation because they wanted to believe it. And all previous Communist sabotage of true democracy, all previous attempts to vilify democratic Western governments and overthrow them, were airily brushed away by Stalin as a "tragic-comic misunderstanding".



The Marseillaise — With a Russian Accent

The greatest ally and asset the Communists ever had in France was Adolf Hitler. The majority of the French people were indifferent or hostile to Communism, but they could hardly remain indifferent to the new German Fuehrer, who, just across the French border, openly threatened to revenge

the Treaty of Versailles, by force if necessary, and was pledged to rearm Germany and make her Europe's leading power. Further, the cruelties and repressions of Soviet Communism were far away and largely unknown to most of the West at the time, while the twentieth century Attila was reversing the barbarism of the dark ages a stone's throw away. Every threat from Hitler, every Nazi atrocity, made the Communists look better by comparison.

The French Communists joined the Radicals of Daladier and the Socialists in celebrating the 1935 Bastille Day in Paris, and the Communist-dominated French trade unions called for reunification with the democratic French trade unions they had been attacking viciously for years. The well-intentioned parties of the Left, many of whose members felt that the Communists were only their erring and over-enthusiastic brothers, joined with Communists in the *Comite national de rassemblement populaire* to work out a common political program.

The new policy bore rich fruit in the May elections of 1936, when, in the face of the Nazi danger the new solidarity of the Left resulted in a Popular Front victory. Although the Communists only won 72 seats in the French Chamber of Deputies to 149 for the Socialists and 109 for the Radicals, the parties of the Left had a clear majority of 386 seats to the 222 seats won by the various parties of the Right.

Leon Blum, the Socialist leader, became Premier of a Popular Front ministry on June 5, 1936. The Communists would not accept cabinet office but they pledged support for the Government if it carried out the Popular Front program. They thus evaded responsibility and preserved their freedom of action for cooperation or sabotage, depending on future circumstances.

It was an uneasy alliance from the beginning. The Communists pursued and ambiguous policy. They could not bring themselves to trust their fellow members in the Popular Front coalition, and they persisted in sabotaging and undermining the democratic leaders of the other parties that they had promised to support. The workers wanted to enjoy some of the fruits of their political victory, and much labor unrest ensued, including a wave of sit-down strikes. The Com-

munist as usual played both ends against the middle, but for once were in a difficult position. Moscow's orders to the French Communist leadership insisted on the strengthening of the French economy and national unity to oppose Nazi Germany. The Communists had always posed as the friends of the workers, so it was almost impossible for them to sabotage the workers' demands or not to support the strikes. Furthermore, it is doubtful if the rank and file was let into all the ramifications of the policy of the leadership. It stands to reason that if the bosses of French Communism, who had for years posed as the most militant leaders of the working class, had admitted openly that they had been ordered to slow down on the workers' demands, they would have lost much, if not most, of the French rank and file Communist membership. Accordingly, the Communist approach to the labor crisis in France was halting and ambivalent.

Most of the lower leadership actively encouraged the strikers, and the more militant Communists on the lower echelon, who had not been given all the nuances of Moscow's current policy, tried to exploit the crisis into a "revolutionary situation". An abortive revolution which was unlikely to succeed and which could only weaken France was the last thing Moscow wanted at the time. Accordingly, the French Communist leadership could only plead for granting the workers' demands without taking too firm a position of labor's side, and they breathed a sigh of relief when compulsory arbitration was imposed by the government.

The leaders of the Socialists and the other democratic parties of the Popular Front soon realized that the Communists were not acting in good faith. The Communist policy in the Spanish Civil War, which erupted soon after the Popular Front assumed power in France, and the bloody Moscow purges of the Russian Party, further confused and disgusted much of the French Left, which had been anxious to cooperate with the "reformed" Communists in the Popular Front. In June 1937, Leon Blum resigned as the head of the Popular Front government. Although the Communists still attempted to convince France they sincerely supported democratic aims and were anxious to cooperate with other parties of the Left, by the time they again moved into open opposition

in late 1938, it was clear to the French working class that honest cooperation with the Communists on terms of equality and in the national interest was impossible.

The Tragedy of Spain

Until the Spanish Civil War, Communists in Spain were few in number and minor in influence. By the end of the war they had achieved control of the dying Republic, they had deliberately killed and executed thousands of honest Socialists and Anarcho-Syndicalists, and had buried effectively the hopes of the Spanish working class for decades. The Communists were the Juda sin in the agony of Spanish democracy which ended in the Franco dictatorship.

Following the new Moscow line the Spanish Communists combined with the Republicans, the Socialists and the Catalans in the Spanish Popular Front which, also supported by the Anarcho-Syndicalists, was elected in February 1936 under the leadership of Azaña, a Republican (Party of Republican Action), who became President.

The tragic story of the fratricidal Spanish War from the generals' revolt of July 18, 1936 until the final surrender of the Republican forces to Franco early in 1939 had been told from both sides. The adherents of the Republic tend to paint their cause and its leadership as white as snow, and the forces of Franco as the blackest of reactionary fascists. Franco and his supporters paint the Republicans as bloodthirsty murderers and the foes of Western civilization, while they declare Franco is a knight in shining armor, the chivalrous defender of Spanish honor against all the forces of evil.

But the problem is not as simple as that. It is not a question of pure black or pure white. For the Red of Soviet imperialism has muddled the colors to such an extent that the world has lost all objectivity on the Spanish War.

When the generals' revolt broke out, the organized workers remained loyal to the Republic. So did almost all the Catalans, including the business and professional classes, who felt that they were defending the cause of Catalan nationalism. In Castille, too, the bulk of the business and professional

classes supported the Republic, as did the Socialists and Anarcho-Syndicalists throughout Spain. The Communists, who also supported the endangered Republic, were a comparatively small splinter party who had long since split from the Socialists, who controlled the largest Spanish trade union organization. As usual, the Communists were a small, tightly-disciplined Party dedicated to the exploitation of every situation for the benefit of world Communism, as outlined by the Party chiefs in Moscow.

The primary Soviet interest in Europe at the time was to defend Russia against Nazi Germany and Hitler's ally, Mussolini. As Franco was strongly supported by Germany and Italy, Moscow was determined to do everything in its power to prevent a Fascist Spain, which would weigh the European balance against the U.S.S.R. Accordingly, all Communist parties in every country did everything possible to support the Republicans. But the paradox was that Stalin did not at first want a Marxist revolutionary Spain, wholeheartedly dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism. This was the Russian dilemma. He had to fight the forces of Franco, but he could not support the armed Spanish workers in a proletarian revolution, for an outright Proletarian Spain would frighten the West and lessen the chances of a Russian-British-French alliance against fascism. For these reasons international Communism and the Spanish Communists at first were instructed only to support the Republican government, and not to call for the expropriation of Spanish landlords or the socialization of Spanish industry. But everything possible was done right from the beginning to infiltrate the Spanish Republic with Communists agents subject to Stalin's bidding so that he might achieve control of Republican policy and Republican forces to transform the Popular Front into a Communist-dominated government serving the interests of Soviet power. Bela Kun, the old Hungarian Communists leaders later shot by Stalin, was one of the early arrivals from Moscow, to be followed by a host of loyal international Communists from almost every country in Europe and America.

Army units loyal to the Republic and the militias of the Republican Spanish political parties quickly put down the rebels in much of Spain, but organized Italian and German

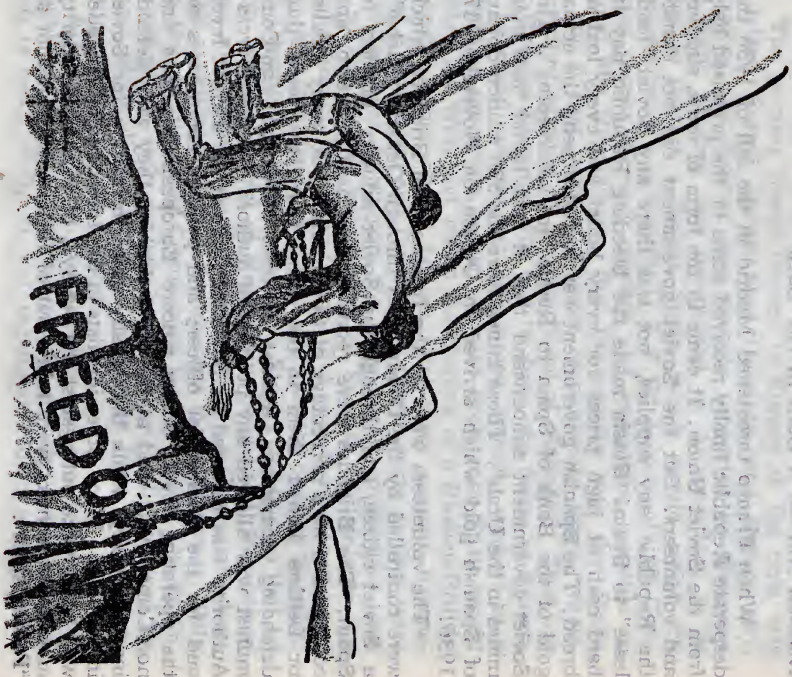
help to the rebels quickly weighted the scales in their favor. In its hour of danger the Republic turned to Russia for help, as England and France honestly supported the policy of "non-intervention". Russian aid was the opening wedge for the Communist betrayal of the Republic, and of the Spanish people.

Russian Aid — A Stab in the Back

When Franco threatened Madrid in the fall of 1936 the desperate Republic finally received some of the promised help from the Soviet Union. It came in the form of arms, supplies and volunteers. But the Soviet government did not donate the Republic any supplies, not was there any Soviet "lend-lease" to Spain. Russia made the bleeding Republic pay in hard cash at high prices for every bullet and every loaf of bread. The Spanish government was forced to send the actual gold of the Bank of Spain to Russia "for safekeeping". The Soviet government announced that it had found "new gold mines in the Urals". Those mines were the 530 million dollars of Spanish gold which arrived in Odessa on November 17, 1936.

The volunteers were for the International Brigades, which were controlled by the Communists through General "Kléber", a Soviet citizen, and through the Soviet military mission to Spain. The Brigades were recruited by the Comintern, and contained a high percentage of Communists, but many idealistic Leftists joined them in the belief that they were thus defending democracy against Fascism. But no non-Communist was allowed any position of authority in these forces. Authority was reserved for Soviet advisors at the highest level, and for the Communist officers and political commissars on the operating level. Many sincere European Socialists and non-Communists died at the front thinking they were defending democracy, while they really gave their lives for Soviet imperialism. Many other idealists in the International Brigades who later spoke out against the betrayal of workers' solidarity and Soviet control were taken out of their units and shot as "Fascist spies".

The more dependent the Republic became on Communist aid, the more demands for control were made by the Communists. The first thing they wanted was the elimination of the militias, which were still controlled by the other Republican political parties. They demanded that they be disbanded and integrated into the regular army over which the Communists were gaining effective control. Paradoxically, due to Moscow's European policy, they also demanded that all radical social



changes be postponed until after victory. Most important of all, they demanded that all their enemies within the republican camp be removed from any influence and eliminated. The Communists had the prestige and the supplies of Russia, and protest was quieted by the threat that non-compliance would mean the cutting off of Russian supplies and the victory of Franco.

A token resistance to these demands was made at first by the government, then headed by Largo Caballero, a Left Socialist, but the Communists, supported by the Soviet Ambassador and consuls, gradually gained increasing control. The dividing line between Communist "help" and Communist domination came in May 1937, and the center of the Communist coup was not Madrid, but Barcelona, where the forces opposing them were comparatively strong.

In Catalonia the Anarcho-Syndicalists opposed the official Communist social policy, and were opposed to placing their military units under the Communist-dominated army. But the greatest hatred of the Communist was reserved for the P.O.U.M., an anti-Stalinist Marxist party which was very strong in Catalonia. The Communists accused them of being "Trotsky-Fascists" and did everything they could to starve them of supplies, and arms at the very time their military formations were fighting and dying, while holding one of the most critical sectors of the Aragon front. The Communists struck at the P.O.U.M., in Barcelona on May 3, 1937. Communist-controlled secret policy and army units scooped up Andres Nin, the head of the party, and all the party leaders, most of whom were liquidated in the special Communist prisons presided over by Soviet experts of the N.K.V.D.

George Orwell, the great English author, was a convinced Socialist. When the Spanish Civil War began he volunteered to go to Spain to fight Fascism. As a member of the Independent Labour Party, he joined the P.O.U.M. militia in Spain, but at the time he was extremely sympathetic to Communism and was for the Communist Party line, even though he was not a Communist Party member. His experiences in Spain in 1937 did not shake his faith in Socialism, but it opened his eyes to Communism in practice as a totalitarian police movement presided over by Soviet policemen. After

having been seriously wounded at the front and almost shot by the Communists for no other reason but that he was a member of a P.O.U.M. army division, he returned to England. When he told the truth about the Communists in Spain, this man who had almost died defending the workers' cause in Spain was reviled as a "Trotsky-Fascist, and Franco spy."

Listen to what he wrote in 1937 about what he saw in Spain.

"As a militiaman one was a soldier against Franco, but one was also a pawn in an enormous struggle..." He shows how power began to pass to the Communists as early as November 1936, when the U.S.S.R. began to supply arms to the Government. "The Russians were in a position to dictate terms... and the first move against the revolutionary elements, the expulsion of the P.O.U.M. from the Catalan Generalite, was done under orders from the U.S.S.R. It has been denied that any direct pressure was exerted by the Russian government, but the point is not of great importance, for the Communist parties of all countries can be taken as carrying out Russian policy, and it is not denied that the Communist Party was the chief mover against the P.O.U.M., later against the Anarchists, and against Caballero's section of the Socialists. Once the U.S.S.R. had intervened the triumph of the Communist Party was assured... the Russian arms were supplied via the Communist Party, who saw to it that as few as possible got to their political opponents. This is why there were so few Russian arms on the Aragon front, where the troops were predominantly Anarchist. Until April 1937 the only Russian weapon I saw—with the exception of some aeroplanes which may or may not have been Russian—was a solitary sub-machine gun..."

"The Popular Front is really an alliance of enemies, and it seems probable that it must always end by one partner (the Communists) swallowing the others. The only unexpected feature in the Spanish situation—and outside Spain it has caused an immense amount of misunderstanding—is that among the parties on the Government side the Communists stood not upon the extreme Left, but upon the extreme Right. The whole of Comintern policy is now (1937) subordinated to the

defense of the U.S.S.R., which depends upon a system of military alliances. In particular, the U.S.S.R. is in alliance with France, a capitalist country, and the alliance is of little use to Russia unless French capitalism is strong, therefore Communist policy in France is now anti-revolutionary. This means that French Communists have had to drop all effective agitation in the French colonies. It is less than three years since Thorez, the Secretary of the French Communist Party declared that French workers would never be bamboozled into fighting against their German comrades; he is now one of the loudest-lunged patriots in France. The clue to the behavior of the Communist Party in any country is the military relation of that country, actual or potential, towards the U.S.S.R... In Spain the Communist 'line' was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that France, Russia's ally, would strongly object to a revolutionary neighbor and would raise heaven and earth to prevent the liberation of Spanish Morocco".

These words were written almost twenty years ago by a man who is recognized as one of the most brilliant writers and political analysts, and one of the most devoted Leftists England ever had. His words still have validity today. The Communist 'line' changes from year to year and from country to country, but Communist long-term aims and the treachery, cynicism, and double-dealing they employ to achieve those aims have never changed. The May street-fighting of 1937 in Barcelona resulted in the fall of Caballero, who was not considered "accommodating" enough by the Communists, and his replacement by Dr. Negrin as the Premier of the Spanish Republic. From that time until Franco's victory in 1939 the Communists were increasingly in complete control of the Spanish government. The P.O.U.M., which was the victim of a treacherous attack by the Communists who were fellow-members of the Popular Front, was blamed for the Barcelona fighting by the Communists with their usual bare-faced effrontery. To quote Orwell further:

"In the Communist and pro-Communist press the entire blame was laid on the P.O.U.M. (There was a general Communist charge) that the P.O.U.M. was a secret Fascist organization in the pay of Franco and Hitler. It was further charged that the P.C.U.M. troops were playing football

with the Fascists in no man's land at a time when the P.O.U.M. troops were suffering heavy casualties and a number of my personal friends were killed and wounded.

In August 1937, an international delegation headed by James Maxton, a British Labour member of parliament went to Spain. Prieto, the Republican Minister of National Defense, admitted to Maxton that "the arrest of the P.O.U.M. leaders was not decided upon by the Government, but was carried out by the police, which has been infiltrated by the Communists". Irujo, the Minister of Justice, admitted to Maxton that the Police had become "quasi-independent" and were "in reality under the control of foreign Communist elements". Even with a signed order from the Director of Prisons and the Republican Minister of Justice a British Member of Parliament and others of an international delegation could not obtain admission to one of the "secret prisons" maintained by the Communist Party in Barcelona.

After the May fighting, Orwell returned to his division at the front and was very seriously wounded almost immediately, being shot through the throat, the bullet coming out of the back of his neck. He was sent to a hospital near Barcelona, and discharged as medically unfit for duty at the end of June. It is notable that Orwell was not an active anti-Stalinist, or anti-Communist; he was not even a member of the P.O.U.M. He was simply a convinced democrat and anti-Fascist. And yet when he was discharged from the hospital, he had to hide from the police in Barcelona simply because he had been a member of a P.O.U.M. militia unit. When he arrived in Barcelona he was told by a friend to go into hiding immediately. "The P.O.U.M. has been suppressed. They've seized all the party buildings. Practically everyone's in prison and they say they're shooting people already."

Orwell escaped the Communist police in Spain and got back home, but thousands of other volunteers were not so fortunate. Those who died at the front defending the Republic were lucky. They died in the belief that they were defending the Spanish working class against fascism. But what of the later thousands who were imprisoned and executed by the Communists in Spain for no other crime than

that they belonged to political parties which were opposed to Soviet policies, and to the Communist leaders who blindly carried out that policy? They died ingloriously, in the knowledge that they, and all the other members of the democratic parties and the parties themselves who had joined with the Communists in the Popular Front, had been betrayed. This was the reality beneath the slogans which had taken them in. And a wounded Englishman who had lost his voice to a Franco bullet speaks today in a louder voice than all the Communist journals and radios from Moscow to Peiping.

The Spanish Civil War dragged on to the final defeat of the Republic in 1939, but by that time the Republic was no longer representative of the Spanish working class; it had been made the captive and the tool of the Soviet Union, a Red Moloch which needlessly devoured tens of thousands of Spanish lives. Ironically, many of the most important Communists sent to Spain, including some of the most infamous N.K.V.D. butchers sent to supervise the Communist police, were themselves later tortured and killed by Moscow's experts in the Soviet "purges", which consumed much of the Party elite in the U.S.S.R., and which ended in execution or living death in Arctic slave camps for millions of ordinary Soviet citizens.

Popular Fronts in other Western Countries

France and Spain, the two countries where the Communist Popular Front tactic was "successful", both suffered. France was weakened and Spain was destroyed. In the other countries of Western Europe no Popular Front governments were formed, although the Communists made some gains in penetrating Leftist parties in the 1935-39 period.

In the Popular Front period the Communists began to pay particular attention to Latin America. Organizers and money were sent from Europe, North America, and even from the Orient to spread the new gospel. Considerable success was achieved in penetrating the Mexican trade unions, and even though the government of General Cardenas was never captured by the Communists, and General Cardenas himself and his closest collaborators were neither Communists nor fellow-

Russia's "peace policy". But the cynical Soviet alliance with the Nazi murderers backfired against world communism in the free countries, and exposed it for the feudal imperialism it really is. Far from being a "peace pact" it was a plain aggressive agreement whereby the two most vicious dictators of modern times decided in mutual interest not to attack each other but to attack the more democratic nations on their borders. Hitler got a free hand in Europe, and paid his ally Stalin with eastern Poland, the small and helpless Baltic states of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia, a slice of Rumania, and a hard-won slice of gallant little Finland. The Communists were instructed in all countries to treat the democratic defense of Poland by France and England as "an imperialist war". This new Comintern line greatly aided Hitler. French and English Communists did not support and effectively sabotaged the war efforts of their countries, while the workers of France and England were trying to defend themselves against the bloodthirsty Nazi military machine. The French Communists, who had claimed to be the foremost supporters of the democratic French government against the Fascist imperialists who had attacked blameless Poland, and who vowed to defend the French Republic to the last drop of their blood, overnight justified the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland as "liberation from the vicious Polish landlords and exploiters" and demanded England and France make peace with Hitler.

The Communists denounced the past Popular Fronts and returned to allout attack on the democratic parties they had been wooing but days before. For two solid years the Communists did everything they could to sabotage the forces of democracy, threatened as never before in modern times. From the summer of 1939 to the summer of 1941 Communist policy helped Hitler and stabbed democracy in the back. And then the thieves fell out. Hitler attacked Russia on June 22, 1941, and again overnight the Communists became the most vociferous defenders and supporters of democracy.

Friends and Allies

When Russia was attacked by erstwhile partner in crime, all the resources of Communist propaganda and every Com-

munist around the world was thrown into the fight against the Axis. All the agents the Communists had succeeded in planting in governments from Washington to Brazil and from Cairo to Capetown were instructed to stop hindering governmental efforts to oppose the Axis and to call for immediate war to the death on the Fascist dictators.

They could hardly succeed immediately in forming Popular Front governments after their previous perfidy, but they could again proclaim that they were good democrats and use the cover of respectability in the new wartime alliance of the U.S.S.R. and the democracies to bore from within. And they could bide their time.

Under the cover of common effort and blood shared with the democracies in the struggle against the Axis and later the Japanese they could prepare for the end of the war, and for the further communist imperialism which was to enslave 100 million new Europeans and half of Asia. First British-American bombers and Allied-supplied Soviet armies began to wear down the Nazi juggernaut. Then Allied armies in the West and Soviet armies in the East began to beat the wounded Nazi armies back toward their homeland. North Africa was freed from the Germans and Italians. Italy was knocked out of the war and the hard-fighting Germans were pushed inch by bloody inch up the Italian boot. British and American naval power defeated the German submarine attempt to cut the sea lines and deny supplies to England and the armies on the front. And countless British and American seamen and many proud ships died in the frigid waters of the North carrying aid to Russia on the Murmansk run.

And in the Pacific United States Marines rotted and died in the jungles of islands with unknown names to push back the fanatical Japanese armies. And new American and British sailors and ships came back to the waters of the Pacific where they had been surprised and sunk in 1941 to humble and destroy the once proud Imperial Japanese Navy. And the Chinese fought and died to expel the Japanese invaders of their land.

The men and women of Europe, of North and South America, and of the Orient, fought and produced the goods and manned the factories and grew the crops that were needed.

And at last the job was done. Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy and Imperial Japan were defeated, and exhausted mankind breathed a sigh of relief that the war was over.

But a new and different war was about to begin. The war the Communists had declared in 1917 and that they had never finished. The war for Communist world imperialism. And again the Communists turned to an old weapon: The Popular Front.

Popular Front By Force — The Enslavement of Eastern Europe

At the end of the War Russian armies occupied half of Germany, all of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria; in Yugoslavia and Albania some Soviet troops and Communist-controlled partisan forces were in control. Ten years later, in every one of these countries there is a Communist regime. Not by choice, for since the Communists achieved control they have not allowed free elections. But most of these countries have a long democratic tradition, and Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Albania were not enemy countries. They were attacked, and we fought to free them from Nazi tyranny. How have they fallen under a new tyranny which is at least as repressive as the old? How did they lose the liberty we thought had been restored to them at such cost at the end of World War II?

By Soviet force and intervention, yes. But not alone by naked force and terror. In 1945 it looked as though they would achieve true and democratic freedom over their destinies. By 1948 the world realized that they had lost all semblance of freedom and become outposts of the Soviet empire, to be exploited worse and denied less voice, in their own affairs than African natives in the worst days of Western imperialism, two centuries before. Soviet enslavement in the "Peoples Democracies" took place by that old Communist tactic, the Popular Front. First there was usually a variation of the old Popular Front government tactic, under which the Communists in the

coalition split and captured their partners; but this time there was the added support lent to the Communists by Russian occupation troops and supplies. This was followed by a Popular Front in which all power was held by the Communist but the dehydrated and ineffectual political parties still continued, nominally, to exist as part of the government. Finally there was to be the elimination of any other political organizations by their voluntary "fusing" into a "monolithic" Communist



bloc", whereby the country was made into a Communist police state. At every stage, but particularly the second, political opponents were vilified and those suspected of being dangerous eliminated by arrest on trumped-up charges, long prison terms or execution. It is interesting to examine the mechanics of Communist enslavement in these different countries, for there were variations depending on local conditions. But of those 100 million people it was not interesting—it was a matter of life and death.

Yugoslavia represents a special case. A national Liberation Front had been set up during the war which really was a large Communist movement including many non-Communists. Further, Yugoslavia and Albania were the only two of these countries which were liberated largely through their own efforts. Although there is no true democracy in Communist Yugoslavia, it has been much more democratic than the other regimes, and about the time that the Communists became completely repressive police-states, totally subservient to Moscow, Tito made his Communist Declaration of Independence and defied Stalin. Since that time the Tito government has taken some halting steps toward democratization. Tiny Albania remained in the Soviet orbit. It has made little pretense that its own National Liberation Front government is anything but a Communist dictatorship.

In Poland almost all of the large Resistance movement under the German occupation was anti-Communist, and committed to the legitimate London Government-in-exile. For that reason the Red Army outside Warsaw misled the Polish patriots in the city when they rose against the Nazis, and the Russians deliberately made no move to attack the Germans or liberate Warsaw until the Germans had crushed the uprising and captured its leaders. Meanwhile the Russians had created a bogus "National Liberation Council" in 1944 which they falsely declared consisted of the Communists, the Socialists, and the Democratic and Peasant Parties. This "government" was installed as the Red Army advanced in Poland. The true Polish Socialist Party and the real Peasant Party would have nothing to do with this Front government. The "Democratic Party" was a Communist creation. This Com-

munist collection of puppets was the so-called Lublin government. Under an agreement reached in June 1945, mostly due to Allied pressure on the U.S.S.R., members of the genuine Polish Government-in-Exile were to be allowed to unite with the Communist-dominated government which had by then been established in Warsaw to form a joint Provisional Government until free elections were held. Only the genuine Peasant Party led by Mikolajczyk agreed to participate. The small Christian Labour Party also joined the Government. When its leader dissolved it because he declared it was impossible to cooperate with the Communists, it was immediately declared "re-formed" under a Communist stooge. Every possible means of intimidation was used against the Peasant Party. Nevertheless it received a large vote in the fraudulent elections which were finally held in January 1947. The elections were held under conditions of extreme terrorism. The police beat up, arrested and even killed Peasant Party workers, and falsified the election returns, as is amply documented by the official observers. The Peasant Party was harassed by the Communists after the election and destroyed, and Mikolajczyk had to flee for his life. Communist stooges then took over the remnants of the Peasant Party. The "Socialist" Party now has a platform identical to that of the Communists:

Gomulka, a long-time Communist, and one of the few Polish Communists who remained in Poland under the Nazi occupation, was released from prison and "rehabilitated" last year. He was arrested in one of the purges when he was suspected of "Titoist tendencies".

In October 1956 he became the new leader of the Polish Communists and very bravely defied the Soviet Union. A "national" Communist, it is extremely unlikely that he will lead Poland to even a limited democracy, but he has the support of his anti-Communist country at least in his attempt to loosen Soviet, if not Communist, control.

Due to the Soviet occupation of Eastern Germany, the Communists have had complete control since 1945. The Communist government consists of a Front headed by the so-called Socialist Unity Party (SED). The Communist, Social Democratic, and Liberal Democratic Parties, and the Christian

Democratic Union were legalized under the Soviet occupation. In 1946 the Socialist Democratic Party was forcibly merged into the Communist Party. In 1948 two Communist puppet parties were set up: The National Democratic and Democratic Peasant Parties.

Pre-Communist Social Democrats were at first given official positions but any show of independence has been met with arrest and imprisonment. All parties have been repeatedly purged. Among the thousands of East Germans who escape the Communist paradise each year to the West have been many of the officials of the Social Democratic Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Christian Democratic Union. After having in many cases sincerely attempted to cooperate with the Communists, they have taken their lives in their hands to escape.

Czechoslovakia's Government-in-exile went to Moscow in March 1945, where a National Front government was formed of six parties including the Communists. The Communists immediately began their usual tactics of boring from within, splitting the other parties, and vilifying their leadership. Following the 1946 elections which gave them over a third of the vote, the Communists achieved their most powerful impetus when Gottwald, the Communist leader, became Prime Minister. He packed the whole government machinery with Communists. Some indication of the true "independence" of a Communist government official can be found in the events of July 1947. The Czechoslovak government unanimously and gratefully accepted participation in the forthcoming Marshall Plan conference. The United States offer of disinterested aid was gratefully looked forward to by virtually the entire country regardless of their politics. But after hurried instructions from Moscow the Communist ministers reversed themselves, and Czechoslovakia was forced to reject participation. In 1947 the Communist also carried out many political arrests in Slovakia. New elections were slated for 1948, and it was generally admitted that the Communists would poll only a slight portion of the vote they had won in 1946. Before the elections could be held the Communists staged a coup in February 1948 and forcibly seized power in the so-called "bloodless revolution". The main leaders of the other

political parties were arrested, committed suicide or escaped abroad.

The democratic parties were absorbed or manipulated so that they became mere Communist fronts, and when President Benes resigned as President in June 1948, Gottwald became Czechoslovakia's Communist president. The National Front continued to exist but it is a transparent facade for Communist dictatorship. All important government posts are held by reliable Communists and the other "legal" parties are run by Communist stooges who do not even pretend to have any program or will of their own.

In Hungary the Communist, Social Democrat, Smallholder, National Peasant and Burgeois Democratic Parties combined in a "National Independence Front" in December 1944. Despite Soviet occupation and heavy pressure the Communist only gained 17 per cent of the vote in the election of November 1945. The Communists then began what their leader Rakosi described as "salami tactics", destroying the opposition apart a slice at a time. They first began to split the Smallholders, the majority party. With the help of the Russian occupation forces and under Soviet pressure a purge of this party was undertaken which resulted in the forced expulsion of many deputies and officials.

In February 1947 the Soviet authorities arrested the Secretary-General of the Smallholders, Bela Kovacs, and while the Smallholder Prime Minister, Ferenc Nagy, was out of the country they claimed they had uncovered a "great conspiracy" in which he was involved. The Communists were now in virtual control of the country and after further pressure and "salami slicing" they held an "election" in August 1947 in which they received more votes than any other single party, even though by their own figures they could not achieve a Communist majority.

In February 1948 the Social Democrats were purged. The true leadership of the party and of the Hungarian trade unions was arrested or expelled, and in March some trials were held, followed by the forced merger of the Social Democrats with the Communist Party. In January 1949 the National Independence Front was renamed the "Peoples Independence Front" and the remaining phantom parties were

merged into it. These pitiful remnants of once proud democratic parties, today exist only in name. They have no more party offices, no more members, and no more party newspapers, but the Communists brazenly tell the world that the Hungarian dictatorship is a Popular Front which represents all shades of progressive and democratic Hungarian political opinion.

In Rumania a Coalition Government was formed following King Michael's ouster of the pro-Axis Antonescu dictatorship in August 1944. The coalition government consisted of the Social Democrats the two major parties, the Liberals and the National Peasant Party, and the tiny Rumanian Communist Party of less than 2,000 members. The same tragic story of infiltrate divide and conquer has taken place in Rumania with one difference. Early in 1945 Vishinsky arrived from Moscow and presented an ultimatum to the King that the government be dismissed and replaced by the National Democratic Front headed by Petru Groza, a Communist puppet. To back up this demand Soviet troops occupied important government buildings. The result was inevitable. After valiant rearward political action by the legitimate democratic parties and the King, Rumania had become a Peoples Republic completely controlled by the Communists by the end of 1947.

After the usual Communist splintering of legitimate parties and the imprisonment of any independent leadership, purges and the creation of false parties invented and staffed by Communists and their stooges, the Popular Front after many changes has evolved into simply the Rumanian Communist Party, manipulated and completely subservient to the U.S.S.R.

Bulgaria had never declared war on the U.S.S.R. and no Bulgarian troops ever served on the Russian front. A government consisting of pro-Allyed but anti-Communist parties took office on September 2, 1944, and broke relations with Nazi Germany, but the U.S.S.R. immediately declared war on it and began a Russian invasion of Bulgaria. Before this government was a week old it was overthrown by a coup largely carried out by Zveno army officers, but engineered by the Communists, and the so-called Fatherland Front took

over. The Zveno organization was comprised mostly of Army officers who had long favored a pro-Russian policy. Other members of the Fatherland Front besides Zveno are the Communists were parts of the Agrarian, and Social Democratic parties and some Independents. Georgiev, the leader of Zveno, became Prime Minister and the Ministries of the Interior and Justice were given to the Communists.

The Communists immediately began to sabotage and attack the other members of the coalition. The dismissal of Dr. G. M. Dimitrov, Secretary of the divided Agrarian Party, was demanded at once. He was placed under house arrest but later escaped from Bulgaria. His secretary died while being "interrogated" by the Secret Police. Following their usual tactics the Communists shortly founded a second "rump" Agrarian Party and a phony Social Democratic Party controlled by Communists and fellow-travellers. The false parties "elected" new leaders who took over the apparatus, funds, and publications of the Agrarians and the Social Democrats. The Agrarians, the Social Democrats, and the independents in the Government resigned in protest and their places were promptly filled by Communist puppets.

Under British and American pressure the Communists allowed the genuine leaders of the Agrarian and Social Democratic parties to reform their parties in the fall of 1945, as the Communists and the Soviet Union were still pretending to adhere to their war-time promises of legitimate collaboration and democracy. Even though members of the legitimate Agrarians and Social Democratic Parties were subject to pressure, intimidation and arrest they polled over a million votes in the elections of 1946, held under terrorist conditions and with rampant Communist fraud in the vote count, compared to about three million votes for all the parties of the Communist-controlled Fatherland Front combined. Georgi Dimitrov, the head of the Bulgarian Communists, and the "hero of the Reichstag fire" who had first announced the Communist Popular Front line at the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern in 1935, was made Prime Minister of Bulgaria. Communist pressure and terror were redoubled. In 1947 the transparent Communist mask of democracy was removed entirely. The Agrarians were sup-

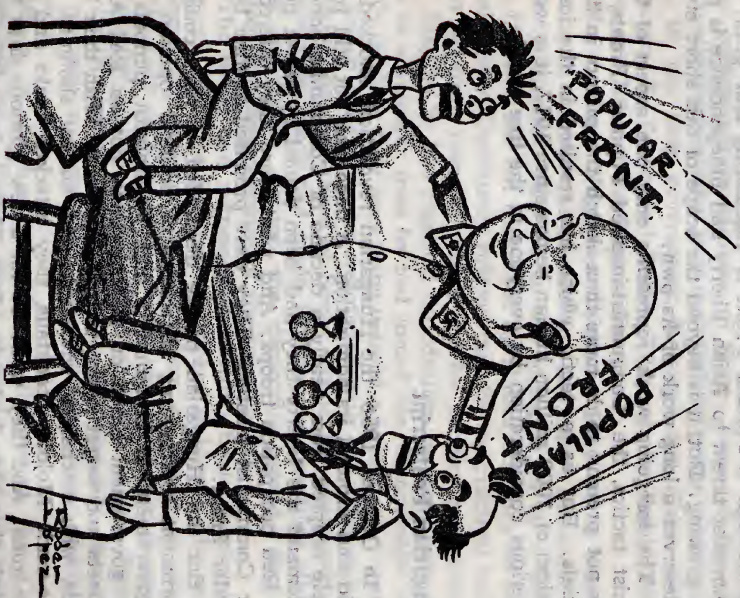
pressed, their deputies expelled from Parliament and their leaders imprisoned and executed. Petkov, one of the most highly respected men in the world peasant movement and the leader of the Agrarians, was falsely accused, tried, and hanged, in one of the most flagrant examples of judicial murder in civilized history. In 1948 the Social Democrats were suppressed and their leaders, except one who escaped to the West, imprisoned. *Zveno*, though still a part of the Fatherland Front, had been purged and all its anti-Communist members dismissed or imprisoned.

The Fatherland Front became a farce, consisting only of the Communists and their puppet parties who had no authority and almost no members. The Communist splinter of the Social Democrats were merged into the Communist Party in 1948. *Zveno* and the miniscule Radical Party "voluntarily" dissolved in 1949. The Fatherland Front now consists of the Communist Party and the moribund Communist splinter of the Agrarians. This is the Popular Front in the Bulgarian police state founded by the late Georgi Dimitrov, the man who announced to the world in 1935 that the Communists would loyally join with and support democratic political parties everywhere on terms of utter fairness and complete equality and who loudly proclaimed to Bulgaria in 1945 "It is not true that we Communists want to have a one-party administration... It is a wicked legend and a calumny that Communists want to assume whole power".

Popular Fronts — Oriental Style

Both the National or United Front, and Popular Front tactics are being busily pursued by Asian Communist strategists. The National Front policy is one in which Communists attempt to exploit any objectives they may have in common with non-Communist, or even anti-Communist parties. Thus in Indonesia the Communists support the non-Communist government on such objectives as nationalism, neutralism, anti-Americanism, or pro or anti-Mohammedanism (the first in Mohammedan Pakistan, the second in Hindu India). In Japan the Communists are trying desperately to induce other parties

to collaborate with them on a variety of specific issues, in particular anti-Americanism, or in Communist terms, "liberation from American imperialist domination". In these countries the Communists zealously guard their organizational independence and sole control for future action, when a different tactic or a revolutionary Communist seizure of sole power may be indicated by circumstance.



The Popular Front tactic is most fully developed in such Communist controlled Asian countries as North Indochina,

North Korea and Communist China. Here the Communists are in complete control of the army, all policy, and the police, but they maintain a transparent fiction that these countries are controlled by a democratic front government representing all democratic forces but "advised" or led by the brotherly Communist Party.

The story of the Communist capture of 600 million Chinese through a Popular Front is fascinating and grim. The Communist threat to Asian liberty and independence is grave and growing. But it is beyond the scope of this short study. It deserves a long work of its own.

The foregoing work represents only one aspect of Communist tactics, the Communist-inspired Popular Fronts, and does not pretend to do more than sketch the picture in its essentials. But as a tactic which has resulted in the loss of freedom of 1000 million human beings since 1917, it is worthy of serious consideration by everyone in the free world.

Hungarian Postscript

In October 1956 the Hungarian revolution shocked the world and aroused its admiration. A once free but still proud people erupted from nearly a decade of Communist bondage to demand the liberty they had been denied by secret police and Red occupation troops. And what were they offered by their Communist masters? They were promised another bogus Popular Front.

But the Hungarian people demanded a real coalition government representing all shades of political opinion, not a government of Communists and Communist puppets. A true government based on free elections, not on Red Army bayonets and secret police torture chambers. With their bare hands, with mechanics' wrenches, and ancient shotguns, and home-made Molotov cocktails, they attacked tanks and machine guns. And they won. Or for a few glorious days they thought that they had won. Imre Nagy, a new Communist Primer Minister who had himself suffered from Stalinist imperialism, promised the Hungarian people independence.

Promised an honest coalition government and free elections. More than promised. Miraculously, Bela Kovacs, the Secretary-General of the Smallholders party when he had been imprisoned in 1947 was still alive. He was made Minister of Agriculture. Anna Kethly, the grand old woman of Hungarian Social Democracy was still alive. Her hair white from years of Communist prisons and Communist indignities, but her fighting spirit as young as ever, she too assumed her rightful place in the government as Minister of State. Some of the other democratic leaders who had not died in prison were given posts in the new government, Kelen and Fisher, Social Democrats, S. Szabo and Zoltan Tildy of the Smallholders, Farkas and Bibó of the Peasant Party.

May be Imre Nagy was insincere. May be he was attempting to control the revolution and save Hungary for Soviet Communist. May be he was trying to set up a Titoist state, Marxist, but not controlled by Russia. Or may be what he had seen in Communist prisons, may be the practical reality of ten bankrupt years of misery for his country had changed him. May be he had regained the idealism he must have had when as a younger man he had joined the Communists mistakenly thinking they were going to build a better world instead of a prison state. For he negotiated with the Russians and demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops. He denounced the Warsaw Pact which had made Hungary an unwilling ally of Soviet imperialism against the democratic world. And he promised the disappearance of the secret police.

The world had witnessed the second Soviet betrayal of Hungary. Her cries for freedom choked in blood. Her pleas for democracy drowned by the scream of Soviet jet planes and the bark of Russian automatic weapons. Her desperate plea in the United Nations drowned by a callous Russian veto and the echoes of the Russian ventriloquist's dummies that pretend to represent the countries Russia holds in bondage.

When, in the free countries of the world, the Communists call for a Popular Front of parties with themselves included, listen. If you listen carefully you may hear the end of the refrain. It starts with a persuasive plea for cooperation,

and ends with the soft thud of a bullet in the back of the neck
in a Barcelona jail.

Popular Front! Popular Front! Popular Front!

Listen carefully. You can hear the echo of Russian
deportation trains leaving Budapest with loads of living dead
men bound for the Russian slave camps.

Popular Front! Popular Front! Popular Front!

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